Proposal to stream line the Public Distribution system

*319. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what measures Government propose to take to streamline the public distribution system in the country during the current financial year;

(b) whether the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies have issued or propose to issue any guidelines to the State Governments in this regard; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The Union Government continuously reviews and monitors the Public Distribution System in the country for strengthening, streamlining and bringing about desired improvements in its functioning. The Government of India have issued, from time to time, the following guidelines to the States/Union Territories for streamlining the System in their respective areas:

(1) Opening of new fair price shops wherever necessary to provide easy physical access to consumers and supply of a ration card to every family both in rural and urban areas.

(2) Provision and improvement of infrastructural facilities, such as, storage and transportation of essential commodities to the last link i.e. fair price shops in rural, backward, remote and inaccessible areas.

(3) Provision of proper monitoring system at the block district and State head-quarters levels to ensure up-to-date information in respect of supply or otherwise of essential commodities to the fair price shops.

(4) Preparation of district-wise plans for allocation and distribution of wheat, rice, sugar, imported edible oils, conrrolled cloth, kerosene, salt and coal.

(5) Setting up of Consumers' Advisory and Vigilance Committees at various levels including the fair price shops level.

(6) A schedule for training of employees engaged in PDS work.

(7) Tightening of inspection and enforcement measures to ensure that fair price shops function properly and essential commodities reach the people particularly those belonging to the weaker and vulnerable sections of the population.

(8) Developing a system of effective coordination among various agencies engaged in the task of procurement, storage and distribution of essential commodities within the State.

(9) Provision of mobile fair price shops in tribal and interior areas.

(10) Where new fair price shops are to be opened, the State Governments should consider encouraging, *inter-alia*, the cooperatives to open the outlets particularly in rural areas

(11) The norm of one shop for every 2000 persons be relaxed for far-flung and sparsely populated areas.

(12) Steps be taken to make fair price shops viable and to serve the consumers better.

(13) A review be undertaken of administrative arrangements for PDS.

(14) Setting up of Civil Supplies Corporations, wherever necessary, to handle the essential commodities being provided through PDS.

(15) Possibilities be explored by the States/Union Territories to open fair price shops in Harijan Bastis.